Donald Schregardus Shares His Thoughts on Four Decades in the Environmental Arena

IN THE SPOTLIGHT for this issue of *Currents* is Mr. Donald R. Schregardus, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy (DASN) for Environment. On Monday, August 10, 2015 Kenneth Hess, director of communication and outreach for the Chief of Naval Operations Energy and Environmental Readiness Division (OPNAV N45) and Bruce McCaffrey, managing editor of *Currents* magazine, sat down with Mr. Schregardus in his Pentagon office to get his perspectives on the environmental challenges facing the services today and any advice he may have for his successor.

CURRENTS: For readers who may not be familiar with your background, please provide some insights into the positions you've held.

MR. SCHREGARDUS: I graduated with a bachelor's degree in physics and master's in environmental science from Miami University in Ohio. I first worked at Argonne National Laboratory, outside of Cleveland. There I got to see the environmental challenges that the nation faced in the 1970s and the transition to the environmental standards that we have today. After 11 years, I went on to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and managed the drinking water and wastewater compliance programs for the Midwest region.

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We had the authority to issue orders and initiate legal action against people who were not complying with the law, and we did a lot of that. A lot of these were newly delegated programs, and an important part of enforcement was getting the states to take responsibility. In the political climate of the time,

Mr. Schregardus speaks with Gunner's Mate 3rd Class Jaime Mcleod, left, Cmdr. Christine O'Connell, commanding officer of the guided-missile destroyer USS Winston Churchill (DDG 81) and Capt. Fred Pyle, commodore of Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 2, aboard Winston Churchill in August 2014. Mr. Schregardus was visiting Hampton Roads for meetings with leadership and staff at U.S. Fleet Forces Command and to present environmental awards to NAS Oceana and Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story.

MCS2 Jonathan E. Donnelly

it was difficult for state regulators to bring action against major corporations or municipalities. In fact, the City of Chicago had more attorneys than EPA did at the time. We were forcing very powerful corporations to spend millions of dollars to come into compliance with their environmental regulations.

After working at EPA, I returned to Ohio to become deputy director for water programs at Ohio EPA. After two years, I was selected by the governor to be director of the Ohio EPA. That was my first foray into the public aspect of environmental policy making. I showed up on the first day when there were 30 reporters in the room firing questions at me. So very quickly, I began to appreciate the power of the press and the need to develop relationships with them. You learn how to explain what's going on in the environmental regulatory world to the public through the press.

I stayed in that position until the change of administrations in January of 1999. Then I worked for an environmental consulting firm for two years before the opportunity came to join the Department of Navy. So in 2001, I came to Washington D.C., and I've been here ever since. It's been an honor and a pleasure to work for the Department. We have a great mission, a lot of great people, and do a lot of wonderful things. It's really been exciting to see the transition of environmental programs over my 40 years in the business.

CURRENTS: Talk a little bit about the transition from being an environmental regulator to working for the Navy. What were some of the things that were different in that regard?

MR. SCHREGARDUS: A lot of it was easy, because I'd seen all kinds of environmental issues while at Ohio EPA. But there were some new issues for me—things like the freedom of navigation and how that plays into joint uses of the ocean, issues that we as a Department, and as a nation, are still grappling with.

I was new to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. As a federal agency, every one of our actions, every training, every new facility comes with this analysis. It is particularly challenging—especially for an organization like the Department of Navy—to be able to complete our NEPA obligations within very strict timeframes. Not only is

it important for us to comply, but the public process established by NEPA is the principal way the public has to provide input to the Department. Most of what we do is unfamiliar to the general public, so interaction through the NEPA process is valuable. We have to take that process seriously and make sure we have good communications with our communities and non-governmental organizations (NGO) and others that have a strong interest in some of our activities or impacts.

We have a great mission, a lot of great people, and do a lot of wonderful things.

The other challenge—and this remains a challenge 15 years later—is the Navy organization. It's very large with many different leaders. I think of the Navy as multiple navies—all with individual commanders that change every couple of years. I've had three or four major changes in my entire career. Somebody who's been in the Navy for 30 years has been in 20 different commands over the course of their career. While they may have a broad perspective, they often don't have a deep understanding of environmental compliance, including the purpose of NEPA and how you educate the public. How many N45 directors have we gone through since 2001? I bet the number is at least eight if not ten. Some I never met—they came and they left before I was able to meet them. Then there's the sheer number of leaders. It was probably a couple of years before I got around and met all the echelons.

CURRENTS: Briefly explain the functions of the DASN (Environment) office. What are you charged with accomplishing for the Navy?

MR. SCHREGARDUS: I'm principal advisor to the Assistant Secretary and the Secretary of the Navy on environmental matters, including what we refer to in our budget context as environmental protection, compliance, environmental restoration cleanup, environmental technology, and management of our natural and cultural resources and historic places.

I provide advice to the Secretaries on where we are, what our budgets should be, how we can improve, and how we can incorporate the goals of the administration and other federal agencies while we meet our national security testing and training mission. We also provide policy direction and oversight. We're also the basic coordination spot with other federal agencies and the White House on major environmental policy issues for the administration. I'm pleased and excited about that role and I think it's been substantially enhanced over the last decade.

Mr. Schregardus posing with an endangered Guam rail *(Gallirallus owstoni)*.

We need to ask ourselves, how should the Department of Navy's mission be recognized as new areas are developed—everywhere from energy to climate change to coastline protection to community involvement. I also sit on many boards and commissions and meet with my federal counterparts regularly on a variety of issues that most of the Navy doesn't hear about. We're able to share our concerns and have had some success in getting those other federal agencies to reflect our priorities into their own plans, regulations and programs.

CURRENTS: Can you give us a few examples?

MR. SCHREGARDUS: One example that comes to mind is the Coral Reef Task Force, which includes federal agencies as well as states and territories that have coral reef management responsibilities. I'm the longest serving member of that committee. There's also the Chesapeake Bay Executive Council, which consists of the states and EPA as well as the Department of Agriculture, ourselves, and the Army Corps of Engineers. We have periodic meetings to set goals and track progress on cleaning up the bay.

One of the newest committees that I serve on is the National Ocean Council, established under executive order by President Obama. This council seeks to establish a national policy on the protection of the oceans and coordination among federal agencies, as well as a commitment to public involvement in the protection and management of our coastal waters. It has established a regular dialogue across federal agencies. I think the oceans are a new frontier. They've been the Navy's home for a couple hundred years, but it's only now that some of these other agencies are thinking, "How do we manage our oceans?"

"What about tapping the oceans for various sources of energy? What does joint use of the oceans mean?" We're quite concerned that joint use may, for some, mean "Navy, you can't train here. You may not be able to travel here. You certainly can't discharge here." It can affect—does affect—our operations and planning. So we have to be part of that dialogue.

Mr. Schregardus and Tom Egeland planting a tree at Patuxent River, MD.

CURRENTS: Could you touch on marine spatial planning?

MR. SCHREGARDUS: Marine planning is carried out by the states, working with the federal agencies. The Coastal Zone Management Act gives states the right to determine whether an activity on the shoreline or off their coast is compatible with their planning. Some states have big plans, some have no plans. And that can affect us because we need to operate in the oceans. Off the coast of Virginia is a prime example. The State of Virginia wants to look at oil and gas development. Virginia doesn't own much water space, and what they have is at the heart of the largest naval fleet in the world. What does that mean to us? We've identified concerns to the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) who manages the leasing of those waters. We've talked to the state about it. The public is going to weigh in. We'll have to come to an understanding that is acceptable to the other players, including the general public. In the end, we get our support from the people. Our appreciation of the communities in which we live, being a good neighbor, means a lot to our future.

CURRENTS: What were some of the key issues facing you when you came into the job?

MR. SCHREGARDUS: One of the three biggest issues facing me on day one was marine mammals washing up on the shore of Grand Bahamas Islands in 2000. I came in 2001—the stranding report came out two weeks after I showed up. I had to brief it to the Bahamian leadership, explain why we were in their waters. That was just the beginning of a controversial issue that continues to this day.

We were also in a large national debate over Vieques and how to manage that island. When I arrived, we were just in the process of signing over that island—I believe it was turned over to the Department of Interior in 2003. I negotiated with the Department on what that transfer would look like, what we would do, what were the future uses—reflecting a decade of international interest and concern over the bombing range that we had on the island.

Another big issue is encroachment. With increased scrutiny over envi-

ronmental laws, we are getting more and more limited on what we can do and where we can do it. From our neighbors on our ranges, to our overseas areas, to combat training activities we carry out in the Gulf of Mexico, we've been seeing real pressure on what the future will look like for testing and training. On this issue, we were successful in communicating our concerns to Congress. As a result, we were able to get some changes made to the Sikes Act that allow us to partner and conserve land outside our bases to protect compatible activities. Those changes shifted the playing field for our activities.

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Mr. Schregardus and Capt. Charles Stuppard, commander of Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story, plant grass on the beaches at the base in 2010. Mr. Schregardus toured Little Creek-Fort Story to promote environmental and historical protection throughout the Hampton Roads area.

It's called the Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) program. Until then, federal agencies could only invest in property within our fenceline. The problem was, people were building houses right across our fencelines and then we could no longer fly our planes or shoot our guns, because it's too noisy for the people across the street. We built our bases and our ranges out in the middle of nowhere, but it's not the middle of nowhere anymore. What's the line in the movie, "Build it and they will come?" We built it and they came and then they said, "You're making noise. You're disrupting my sleep and restricting the types of activity I can do in my yard. And you, the Department of Defense (DoD), need to stop that." This piece of legislation has changed the paradigm. It's not "you or them" it's "What can we do?' The land outside our fencelines could be turned into a park. Or cropland if it's in an agricultural community. Or we could designate this land for conservation purposes.

The states of Florida, Virginia, California and others have important conservation initiatives, and they can help. So can the Sierra Club and The Nature Conservancy, who were often looked at as our enemies. We're now saying, "Let's see what we can do together." Within the REPI program there are several thousand acres that have been purchased, protected or conserved in a compatible fashion that not only has met our needs, but also has some great natural resource benefits. It's opened up a dialogue.

For a number of these organizations, it was, "You're the bad guys." Now it's more like, "We still don't agree with everything you do, but we might be able to use you to help us conserve and protect natural resources."

We can all agree on one thing—investments in protecting our bases and protecting our landscapes make sense, and that's only part of the puzzle. You then get matching dollars from the states, cities, counties, and/or NGOs. They'll say, "You're really trying to save a corridor, and we can make this happen." So it's been a valuable tool that we've used successfully. When a Marine Corps General from Camp Pendleton is given an award by the Sierra Club, we've changed the paradigm.

Mr. Schregardus inspects an ecologically friendly alternative tank target positioned on the Pinecastle Impact Range during a visit to Naval Air Station Jacksonville in October 2010. The concrete and steel tank targets, developed with resources provided by the Navy Environmental Sustainability Development to Integration (NESDI) program, are replacing the dwindling supply of surplus Army tanks.

Clark Pierce

That's not to say that encroachment is under control, but we are in a much better place today than we used to be. We have better communication with our neighbors, have some tools to use, and have recognition by other federal agencies of some of the challenges we face. We're better situated to address these issues moving forward than we were a decade ago.

CURRENTS: How have the Navy and our environmental programs evolved since you joined the Department?

MR. SCHREGARDUS: Let's talk about the Marine Mammal Protection Act. Some said the law didn't apply to us. The law talks about "taking" a marine mammal—we weren't "taking" any of them. Every now and then there may be an accident or something but we certainly weren't "taking" them intentionally.

I think the idea that our sound might cause some marine mammals to beach themselves was not appreciated. We felt there wasn't sufficient information to prove a correlation between our use of sonar and the beaching of some marine mammal species. But that particular incident in the Bahamas was a game changer. It wasn't the first one—there had been other instances of beachings, but for those, the connection wasn't as clear.

That incident really changed the facts. The Navy and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) studied the issue and determined that there was no other plausible cause for those beached whales coming ashore on the Grand Bahamas other than that the whales were there, we were training in the area, and the whales didn't have an exit route, so they beached themselves.

Prior to this stranding, we were developing the Surveillance Towed Array Sensor System Low Frequency Active Sonar (SURTASS LFA) program to be able to track submarines at long distances. Questions had been raised about the potential impacts of that system, so we began an environmental study to evaluate that particular system. I signed some Record of Decisions on SURTASS LFA so I became eminently familiar with the decisions in the study. For the hull-mounted mid-frequency sonars we use on our cruisers and destroyers, we couldn't shut down our operations while we obtained authorization to use the system. So we worked with NOAA on a proposal for authorization to use the system on all of our major ranges and operating areas in a risk-based fashion. A decade later we have done that. All of our major installations and operating areas are authorized for testing and training. This was a complex and long process because there are a number of sound

sources in use in a number of different ways—all critical for national security purposes.

Throughout this entire process, the Navy recognized that our operations may have an impact on some species of marine mammals and therefore we will operate our systems in recognition of those potential impacts. Since 2001, we've invested close to half a billion dollars on a combination of research, equipment, studies for NEPA, and permit authorization processes. We developed a whole new set of tools and methods that are now used by scientists to better understand the behavior of marine mammals and how they may react to man-made sound sources.

We recognize that some marine mammals react to our sonar. It may interrupt their diving behavior. But how important is that? What does that mean in their lifecycle? Does prolonged exposure to sound affect their reproduction or how much food they consume? There's a lot of science yet to understand. It's 15 years later with over 200 million dollars invested in the area and we still don't completely understand what these behaviors mean. But we know a lot more.

We've learned a lot about beaked whales, for instance. We thought there were very few of them because you hardly ever see them. Well, in fact, they spend 55 minutes of every hour at depth—that can mean 1,000 or 1,500 meters. They come to the surface only briefly to breathe. And we found out that there are a lot of them. What helped us to determine that? We've got hydrophones at our instrumented ranges for military purposes. Somebody had the idea of using these hydrophones to listen for other sounds. It was then that we discovered an entire world of sound down there. In our instrumented range in the Bahamas, we found that the animals were there and were, in fact, regular inhabitants of the area.

CURRENTS: What do you see as a top priority today?

MR. SCHREGARDUS: I'd be remiss if I didn't say "energy." It's a priority of Secretary Mabus to look at better energy use and alternative energy production across our full range of activities. And energy is so tied to environmental issues. It's probably the number one contributor to air pollution worldwide due to the burning of fossil fuels. So any discussion, improvement, shift, or change generally means fewer emissions, less carbon, and less sulfur.

We've made a lot of exciting progress in the energy realm in just a few years. When you see an F/A-18, one of the most powerful, capable jet fighters in the world, running on a biofuel blend, it's really quite impressive. When the Department puts its mind to something, there's almost nothing it can't accomplish. We have great minds, we have dedicated people, we have substantial resources, and we can accomplish virtually anything. We can change how fuel is produced and used in this country. We certainly are changing how it's used on land. It's pretty dramatic what's changed in the last few years and the future is really exciting.

For More Information

FOR MORE INSIGHTS into the F/A-18's success with a biofuel blend, read our story "From Seed to Supersonic: How Camelina Powered the Navy's Premier Fighter Jet" in the winter 2011 issue of *Currents* at http://greenfleet.dodlive.mil/currents-magazine/currents-magazine-winter-2011.

Senior Airman Joy Cooper shows Mr. Schregardus a preserved Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle (CRB) larva and panel trap during his visit to Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam (JBPHH). The CRB is a high profile invasive species and is a pest of coconut palms and other palm species. During his visit, Mr. Schregardus toured multiple CRB mitigation sites on JBPHH, as well as environmentally significant areas at Pacific Missile Range Facility, to include Nohili Dunes, Turtle Cove and the Shearwater seabird nests and sanctuary.

MCS3 Johans Chavarro

And number two, climate change is something that the DoD and Department of the Navy have taken seriously. It may be the core de-stabilizing issue in the coming decade when you consider the potential impacts that it may have on the production of crops, supply of water, and the political redistribution of land across the globe.

Where are people going to go? What are they going to eat? Climate change is going to affect the security of nations, islands and peoples around the world. While some still want to deny it, clearly it's our job to protect this nation. We ought to be thinking ahead. What do we need to do to be prepared? You need to look no further than the U.S. Naval Academy. Four or five years ago, a hurricane came up into the Chesapeake Bay. It wasn't even a direct hit, but the Naval Academy's engineering building was underwater, and its computers were in the basement. And millions of dollars later, we said, "We ought to plan for that." We need to figure out how we can adapt our national security assets to the changing frequency and impact of storms. In Norfolk, we have the largest naval installation in the world in an area that's going to have more water in the next 50 years or so. The water's coming up and the land's going down. It will take the entire community to address this challenge. Part of that effort will be thinking and planning about the future of our infrastructure.

Climate change is also going to affect our activities in the Arctic. It's an area where we have very little activity, but we're going to have to plan for the Arctic melting sooner and faster than some expected. What are we going to do to protect our assets and prepare for an emergency? The nation needs to think about these things, and we, as an organization, are at the forefront of this thinking.

Let me talk about another priority that's on our agenda. We need to have a

stronger permanent presence in the Pacific. The president said it, we've signed international agreements that support it, and it's the Navy's job to make it happen. Now that's particularly challenging because the land mass is small, the need is large, and all the activities that would need to occur are at a great distance from the U.S. mainland. You need to bring virtually all of the equipment and systems out there. These islands have limited capability and infrastructure. But they also have natural resources and historical and cultural assets that, by our own laws, require protection and conservation. So it's been a particularly complex task. How do you bring a new Marine Corps base to Guam or new training capabilities to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands? Bringing 5,000 more Marines to Pendleton? No big deal. We'll build a few more buildings. Bringing 5,000 more Marines to Guam? Now that's a challenge to work through all the regulatory and environmental issues—including the fact that there are very few federal employees on those islands. There's a lot to evaluate, but I think we're coming close to completing our plans for Guam.

Mr. Schregardus working on a shoreline restoration project in the Chesapeake Bay in 2006.

CURRENTS: Is there anything more you'd like to say about the Navy's interaction and relationships with other government agencies?

MR. SCHREGARDUS: As you know, the president has a national ocean policy. I probably attend at least one meeting a week dealing with some aspect of ocean policy. I think it's critical that the Department is leaning forward on this matter because it allows us to be a voice in an area that we know a lot about, and we have to understand the challenges we face in working with others regarding the use and management of ocean space.

As an example, some folks from the Office of Naval Research were trying to help the small island nation of Palau understand which fishing vessels are in their territorial waters. Palau has thousands of people and thousands of miles of territorial waters around them. But they have very limited availability to patrol those waters. They only have one craft and enough fuel to go on two trips a year to find out who's in those waters and whether they're fishing legally or not. So they talked to some of the folks at the U.S. Pacific Fleet in one of their "know your neighbor" efforts and asked for help from the U.S. government to better understanding who's in their waters. We've looked at developing commercially available, unclassified equipment for a small nation to be able to monitor their waters and ascertain whether there is illegal activity going on out there. This is a great example

The Basics About Palau

PALAU IS AN archipelago of more than 500 islands, part of the Micronesia region in the western Pacific Ocean. In World War II, the battle of Peleliu took place on the Islands. After ferocious Japanese resistance and heavy U.S. casualties, the Allies took the island.

After the war, the United States assumed administration of Palau under United Nation auspices as part of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. In 1982, Palau signed a Compact of Free Association with the United States. In 1994, Palau gained its independence and established diplomatic relations with the United States. Today it is a presidential republic in free association with the United States, which provides defense, funding, and access to social services.

Palau has a population of approximately 22,000 people, most of whom live in the northerly island of Koror. The Palau economy is based on tourism and other services such as trade, subsistence agriculture, and fishing.

of leaning forward, as exemplified by the Navy and the equipment that we're developing in this case.

CURRENTS: What have been some enduring priorities for you and your office?

MR. SCHREGARDUS: One thing that's a priority to me is I like to have facts. Good decisions will be made if decision makers have access to the facts. The Navy has some world-renowned scientists in our midst. I've tried to make sure that the best science is a priority throughout our Department so everyone has access to the facts. I've tried to open up avenues among our oceanographers, ONR, the operational Navy, and our installations. If there's a broader understanding of the information we have, you get better decisions and more options for meeting future challenges.

We also combine that with a strong desire and recognition of the need to partner with others. When I was with EPA, we were regulators. But we can't be everywhere with a traffic ticket forcing folks to do things. You need to educate, you need to advise, you need to help. You need to provide incentives to make an environmental regulation a reality on the ground. It isn't just saying, "You must do this." Whether the issue is encroachment, marine mammals, or marine planning, what works is communication and the sharing of ideas across federal, state and local entities. When our bases partner with local communities, we end up with a lower cost, highly effective solution that conserves plants and animals and protects our bases. By working together, we've created oyster beds that provide security protection as well as support the rejuvenation of oysters in the Chesapeake Bay.

We often look to partner with our friends and battle with our enemies—those who don't happen to support our particular mission at a particular time. But some of our most important partnerships are with environmental interest groups that don't always agree with our priorities. When we work together to support the red cockaded woodpecker at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, for example, we understand each other better. Through these partnerships, we find ways to address our common problems that have benefits far beyond our testing and training requirements.

Through these partnerships we protect endangered species, establish parks, build trust, and maintain an ongoing, productive dialogue. With almost all the federal agencies with which we have regular dealings, we have effective partnerships. This includes NOAA, the National Marine Fisheries Service, and EPA. And we're working to build the same sort of collaboration with BOEM. I often have an assistant administrator from those organizations call me and want to talk about (and resolve) an issue. Those conversations are worth millions of dollars. That's how I like to do business. And that's certainly a practice that I hope that my successor will embrace.

(From left to right:) Mr. Schregardus; Bob Lottie, director, Installations, Environment and Logistics Directorate; Lance Bookless, senior natural resources manager, Environmental Compliance and Protection Department; and Col. Eric W. Schaefer, the commanding officer of Marine Corps Base Hawaii, at the Pacific War Memorial in September 2014.

Another priority is our need to tell our story. We have to be smart, honest and, most importantly, tell the truth when we tell our stories. Even if we don't have all of the information we need, we should still communicate what we know. If we don't, it can be interpreted as though we're hiding something. Especially when something serious happens, some leaders make things worse by trivializing things. And the biggest part of the story isn't the people who have been hurt when a spill occurs (for example), it's the information that is sometimes withheld to cover it up.

In our case we're not trying to covering anything up, and we have a good story to tell. But communication isn't our primary mission. I think our Fleet Weeks are great. It's a way to reach out and touch hundreds of thousands of Americans who don't know much about the U.S. Navy. People always ask, "What do you really do?" It's amazing what we really do. I got a chance to go on the USS George Washington (CVN 73) in the spring of 2002, my first few months on the job, and I was dumbfounded. I've been around for a long time and have seen a lot of stuff. But I had never seen three or four thousand young people, younger than my daughter, managing the most powerful weapons in the world. That's scary and impressive. I sail a sailboat. I can't even get the two people on the boat right next to me to do what I say, especially when one of them is my daughter.

Mr. Schregardus (left) is given a tour of the Montford Point Museum by Houston Shinal (right), Montford Point Monument Director, aboard Camp Johnson in August 2014. Mr. Schregardus toured the museum before visiting Camp Lejeune to congratulate the base for receiving three environmental awards for its sustainability, and environmental restoration programs.
Mark E. Morrow

And everybody wants a story about what's happening today. The press is going to have their own schedule, and you're either going to be part of it or you're going to be the butt of it. You get to set the terms of the debate if you speak about it first. If you wait for someone else to put it out there, you're going to be debating the issues that are framed by others.

CURRENTS: Can you think of an example of a way that you've gotten ahead of an issue in this way?

MR. SCHREGARDUS: When I was director of Ohio EPA, the state was in very tough economic times and they were slashing all the state budgets, so at the end of the year we had to decide, "Do we do less and less across the board?" We were either going to do some things well and drop other things, or get more money. So we had an idea. The entities that were requesting permits for their activities would have to pay closer to the true value of producing those permits. They'd been spending 50 to 500 dollars for a wastewater permit which would typically cost us ten thousand dollars. For an air permit, maybe up to 50 or 75 thousand dollars. And we decided that the entity was going to have to pay half of the real cost of obtaining that permit.

This was a controversial concept at the time. I got in front of the issue by going to every one of the major newspapers in the state and telling them why we needed to do this and what the viable options were. There was a Republican governor at the time who supported the idea, but both the House and the Senate legislatures, who were also Republican, didn't like the idea. But I told them that the federal government was prepared to take over air pollution control permits in the state of Ohio. Air, drinking water and wastewater are all federal programs—they're delegated to states. I told them I was inclined to turn those back over to the federal government if we didn't get the money. All the newspapers came out in support of increasing the wastewater permit fees as I'd suggested. It was a close vote, but in the end the state House and Senate voted "yes."

CURRENTS: Speaking of communication, do you have any ideas about increasing the impact of our communications? Including *Currents*?

MR. SCHREGARDUS: I would like to see us make a more committed investment in electronic communications, whether it be blogs or websites. We have to figure out a way to be proactive, a way to touch people. And right now, everybody's using Facebook, Twitter. I don't know how to Tweet and I'm not on Facebook. But the Department

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: A view of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge from Mr. Schregardus' boat–*My Fair Lady*; Mr. Schregardus navigating *My Fair Lady* in and around the Chesapeake Bay; Mr. Schregardus cruises by the Drum Point Lighthouse during one of his many sailing trips in the Chesapeake Bay. The lighthouse was decommissioned in 1962, having been replaced by a nearby modern navigational aid, and was eventually moved two nautical miles up the Patuxent River to a pier on Backwater Creek, near the Calvert Marine Museum; Mr. Schregardus relaxing on his boat with downtown Annapolis in the background.

would benefit from broadening the use of those channels, and having some creative ideas will really help. We need to be part of these communities, part of these discussions, because we're certainly part of the answer.

CURRENTS: You've talked about some of the challenges and opportunities for your successors. What about your past accomplishments? What are you most proud of?

MR. SCHREGARDUS: First of all, I think accomplishments come from a lot of people working hard. I'm proud that we've developed a strong conservation program that recognizes both our need for training and our conservation obligations. And we've established some benchmarks that our children will be proud of, such as endangered species protection. We've done some very impressive things at a time when our natural resources and a lot of our species are threatened by efforts to develop the lands around our installations.

One great example is the success we've had with the San Clemente Island loggerhead shrike. From thirteen birds, we've gotten up to around 100 nesting pairs. We've achieved similar results with snowy plovers and least terns elsewhere. We were able to get DoD to purchase the logging rights to one of the last old growth forests in the Northwest—2,000-year old trees.

And although we have not resolved the issues relating to the impact of sound on the behavior of some marine mammals, we've developed a lot of good science along the way. We can be more assured that the impacts from our use of sonar are much more limited than was initially suspected. And our scientists and others are still trying to better understand the impacts of anthropogenic sound on marine mammal populations in the ocean.

We've also been very successful in cleaning up our legacy installation restoration sites. The Department invests 500 million dollars every year to clean up these sites. And in the time that I've been here, we've made great strides to clean up after our past mistakes. Working cooperatively with a number of federal and state agencies has enabled us to secure a better future based on the financial investments that the Navy have made in environmental restoration.

CURRENTS: Can you share with us some of your plans for retirement?

MR. SCHREGARDUS: I have so many things I want to do. First, my family. I have two grown daughters and four grandchildren with a fifth one on the way. I clearly want to spend time with them. I certainly want to do some more activities with my church and my community. And I will probably travel around the United States with my wife. We have a beautiful country, and I want to enjoy all the places I've already visited and more that I haven't yet seen. And my last is, I will undoubtedly be sailing. I'll probably make myself a sailboat. I'll do a little bit of racing. I'll teach my grandkids how to sail. So between my family, my community and sailing, I'll be busy.

The view of the Thomas Point Shoal Lighthouse in Annapolis from *My Fair Lady.*

CURRENTS: Is there anything else you'd like *Currents* readers to know?

MR. SCHREGARDUS: Just that I appreciate the chance to say a few words to the broader Navy team. A lot of people come to know about the Navy and what we do through your publication.

I've really been honored and happy for the opportunity to work for the Department of the Navy. The people in the organization have been dedicated and passionate. They've been committed to the Navy, the Marine Corps, and more importantly, protecting the environment around us. And I think we do a very good job. We lead in many areas. I know there are more challenges ahead of us, and I'm very confident that with the passion that they bring to their work, we have a good future ahead. ⚓

For more about the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Environment, visit www.secnav.navy.mil/eie/Pages/Environment.aspx.